

tradition, eloquent speech, and the ability to memorize large amounts of information were highly valued. Their religions were based on creation stories and the worship of powerful spirits—some protective, some tricksters.

European cultures, British, Dutch, Swedish, were based on iron-age technology. Their monetized economy increasingly centered on international commerce in agricultural products and craft goods. Property was private: a few families controlled enormous wealth while many were impoverished and servile. Kings claimed absolute rule over vast territories. Men dominated politics, the law, the economy, religion, and the family. Women, whether aristocratic or poor, were considered weak, irrational, and dependent. Europeans depended increasingly on books, newspapers, and written records. The God of European Jews and Christians was considered all-powerful, but many also believed in the devil, in witches, in ghosts, or in other malevolent spiritual beings.

These divergent cultures were the basis for many misunderstandings. Should captives of war be adopted by the victors or returned to the enemy? Did land exist for communal use or for private owners? Did leaders speak for the group or did they command? Did women's opinions matter? Neither the original peoples living on the back of the great turtle (as the Native peoples perceived the continent) nor the Europeans arriving in an uncivilized, unproductive heathen wilderness (as the colonizers perceived it) understood the full extent of the cultural differences. Often, incidental details like skin color or personal ornamentation, or whether travelers wore hard-soled shoes or moccasins, or whether men or women should work in the fields, symbolized Native and European anxieties. Understanding was not impossible, but it proved elusive, particularly in the face of European insistence on land and dominance.

We do not know who the first European to set foot on the territory now known as Pennsylvania was. A few Dutch trappers may have come through the Delaware Water Gap early in the seventeenth century. French explorers may have walked the shores of Lake Erie. Henry Hudson, an Englishman working for the Dutch, noted the existence of a great bay on the Atlantic Coast on August 28, 1609. Sandbars discouraged him from investigating, but his visit established a tenuous Dutch claim to the region. The Dutch named the Lenapewihittuck the South River (Zuydt Revier), incorporating it into the colony of New Netherlands as the counterpart to the North (now Hudson) River where their capital, New Amsterdam (New York City), lay. The English arrived in 1610 and staked their claim by naming the bay and river for Lord De la Warr, governor of Virginia. But because the Delaware River/Zuydt Revier/Lenapewihittuck apparently held no great wealth, neither European nation hurried to act on its claims. A few years later a Dutch sea captain, Cornelius Hendricksen, might have sailed up the river as far as the Schuylkill (Hidden River) River. Then, in 1623 the Dutch established small trading posts and a small fort south and east of what would become Pennsylvania while negotiating with the Lenape for rights to the Schuylkill Valley. These outposts were understaffed and soon abandoned.

OPPOSITE: Drawing showing seventeenth-century beaver-hunting techniques. Men living in the Eastern Woodlands were skillful hunters. Hunting techniques were adapted to a variety of circumstances and incorporated both old and new technologies. In this English print of beaver hunting, the men (labeled as "savages") hunted with dogs, grappling hooks, and nets when beaver ponds were frozen in the winter. In the summer they were confined to the banks of streams and ponds and employed bows and arrows, guns, and traps to kill the beaver, whose pelts were so valuable as trade items.

OPPOSITE: In 1614–15, Dutch Captain Cornelius Hendricksen sailed up the Delaware, perhaps as far as the Schuylkill River. This map by the captain, while inaccurate and difficult to read, is the first to show the area of Pennsylvania in any detail. Delaware Bay is at the bottom, the Susquehanna River is to the left. The map strongly suggests that Hendricksen did not sail as far as the Schuylkill, because that river is not on the map. Yet it is surprising that the forks of the Delaware (the confluence of the Lehigh and Delaware Rivers), or perhaps the juncture of the Lackawanna and Delaware Rivers, are shown, indicating the possibility of earlier Dutch exploration along the southern and eastern Pocono Plateau, coming from the east. Because the branching of the Susquehanna River shows on this map, these unknown explorers may have traveled west and assumed that the Lehigh (or the Lackawanna) and the eastern branch of the Susquehanna were the same river, even though they flow in different directions. They did not come up the Susquehanna, because they portray it emptying into the Delaware Bay and not the Chesapeake. Three groups of Native peoples are indicated. The largest is the Minquas, with four fortified towns on the western shore of the Susquehanna just below its branching, and another large territory north of the Lehigh or Lackawanna. South on the Delaware two Stankekans settlements face each other across the river, and still farther south a settlement of Sauwanew people can be found on the river's eastern bank.

Yet neither the Dutch nor the English were the first colonizers. During the Thirty Years' War (1618–48), Sweden was a military power in northern Europe and chief guardian of the Lutheran faith against both Roman Catholicism and Calvinist Protestantism. A disgruntled Dutch speculator convinced the king of Sweden to authorize a trading company that he hoped would bring Sweden as much wealth as Catholic Spain while also spreading Lutheranism. A corporation founded in 1626 collected large sums from investors, but internal and international events slowed the project. In 1637 the first expedition finally departed in two small ships under the command of Peter Minuit, the former Dutch governor at New Amsterdam. After an arduous journey, they sailed up the *Svenske Rivier* (Swedish/Delaware/South/Fast-Flowing Lenape River) in mid-March 1638. The forty men—soldiers and servants—were to purchase lands from the “wild nations” and seek their conversion to Swedish standards of behavior and religion. Already aware that there was no gold, colonial officials were instructed to collect beaver pelts and grow tobacco and raise silkworms. They were to search out valuable woods and minerals and to judge the quality of local grapes for winemaking. New Sweden was intended to be an immediate source of profit to investors, not a self-sufficient colony of permanent settlers. It was doomed to failure. The beaver were of poor quality because their fur was not as lustrous as those in colder climates, and the Delaware Valley never became a major source of wine, tobacco, or silk.

Peter Minuit negotiated a treaty with five local Lenape chiefs—Mattahorn, Mitatsemint, Eru Packen, Mohomen, and Chiton—on April 8, 1638. The content of that treaty was variously remembered. The Swedish authorities claimed to have negotiated rights to sixty-seven miles of frontage on the Delaware River, centered at Minquas Kill just below Fort Christina (Wilmington, Delaware) and extending west “as far as the setting sun.” But several decades later three Swedish witnesses remembered a much smaller grant measured by the distance of a cannonball shot from Fort Christina. In addition, an early nineteenth-century metaphorical account of these earliest contacts aptly describes the expansive demands of the Europeans and the misrepresentations they employed at treaty negotiations. The Seneca Chief, Cornplanter, recalled: “The great man wanted only a little, little, land, on which to raise greens for his soup, just as much as a bullock’s hide would cover. Here we first might have observed their deceitful spirit. The bullock’s hide was cut up into little strips, and did not cover, indeed, but encircled a very large piece of land.” When Governor Johan Printz wrote that the Lenape “trust us in no wise and we trust them still less,” both sides had their reasons. European notions of private personal property were alien to the Lenape, who could authorize the use of the land but not its sale. The Swedes also expected exclusive alliances, while the Lenape, recognizing their technological disadvantages and aware of distant warfare, continued to negotiate with all parties for their own protection—Swedes, Dutch, English, Susquehannocks, Minquas, and others. The Swedes regarded Lenape diplomacy as treachery.



Two views of the Lenape. The first (*left*), perhaps more imaginative than realistic, is based on a description given to an artist in Sweden in the late seventeenth century; the artist had never been to America. The second (*right*) was sketched in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century when the Lenape had adopted some European items: sleeved garments, buttons, and what look like rifles. Except for the feathered headdress, colonists on the frontier would have dressed in a similar fashion, imitating Native leggings and moccasins.

Despite the Europeans' aggressive seizure of additional land, relations were remarkably peaceful. Printz was reminded by the Swedish crown to treat the Lenape well. He generally did—signing treaties and negotiating after the occasional killings of settlers. Surviving Swedish sources claim that these few killings were unprovoked, but five took place in March 1643 and 1644, at a point in each year when food supplies were low. European settlers may have been poaching on Lenape hunting grounds. In any event, the Swedes began no wars of revenge for the killings. New Sweden's stance, less aggressive than other colonies, did not reflect understanding, toleration, or belief in human equality. Printz had a foul temper, and Europeans were certain that their culture and religion were superior to those of "savages." Military restraint was necessary because the colony was weak. Fewer than 110 men were available in 1644, and not all were fit for service. At its peak the colony numbered only a few hundred men, women, and children while several thousand Lenape lived in the region. Had the colony been more successful, its early history might well have been as bloody as those of other colonies. Printz thought that with 200 additional soldiers he could "break the necks of every one in the river." Fortunately for William Penn, he never got his wish.

NEW SWEDEN: A CULTURAL HEARTH

New Sweden lasted only a few decades, but it became a cultural hearth. Colonists combined Northern European and Native American traditions to create a culture of market-orientated maize and wheat production, extensive rather than intensive farming, supplemental hunting and fishing, frequent migration, and log construction of buildings. These practices would continue to evolve and spread as later generations of settlers moved throughout the United States.

New Sweden grew to claim land on both sides of the Delaware River, including territories now within the states of Delaware, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The river was not a dividing line on a map but the center of a system of interconnected waterways that connected scattered farmsteads. It linked a series of small forts designed for protection and for holding church services. Rudimentary administrative and commercial centers at Fort Christina and at Tinicum Island (modern Essington, Delaware County, Pennsylvania) were barely maintained through twelve expeditions from Sweden between 1638 and 1656. Two expeditions never arrived, while the last docked after the Dutch conquered the colony. Because of the sporadic traffic between the mother country and its fledgling colony, the settlement remained underdeveloped and understaffed. Supporting even this small imperial outpost with soldiers, tools, ammunition, clothing, livestock, bricks, and other necessities was expensive and complex. The corporation soon learned that the chances for profit were remote, and investors lost interest in assisting the colony.

Swedish authorities insisted that to maximize profits settlers should be "good men, fewer women and fewest children." The scarcity of women, the absence of basic amenities, and the impossibility of family life caused many servants and soldiers to run away to other colonies or to return to Sweden. In 1644, after six years, only 143 inhabitants lived in New Sweden, three-quarters of them men. Of the 200 souls present in 1654, approximately 130 flocked to the ship that had just deposited some 200 new arrivals and returned home to Sweden. Governors complained about shortages of food and clothing, caused in part by planting too much tobacco (with little success) and too few edible crops. Men had to do "things which belong to the women," in addition to their regular tasks of military service, field work, hunting, and fishing. They were forced to transgress customary gender roles "to look after the garden and the cattle, to spin and to weave . . . , to keep the nets and the seines in order, to make malt, to brew the ale, to bake, to cook the food, to milk the cows, [and] to make the cheese and butter." In the near absence of women's economic contributions, life was precarious, arduous, and uncomfortable. Even when more women arrived, they left the care of cattle to men, shocking a later Swedish visitor. He was convinced that the "women-folks" had nothing better to do than "roast themselves by the kitchen-fire," although the list of remaining chores would indicate otherwise. This change was just one sign that European practices would have to be adapted to a new and different environment.



Governor Johan Printz. This portrait shows the governor's massive girth and imperious look. He weighed 400 pounds and was dubbed "the big tub" by Native Americans.

The comparatively few settlers of New Sweden anticipated the later development of the region in their diverse ethnic, racial, and social origins. Large numbers of Finns were recruited, with smaller numbers of Swedes, Dutch, German, and Polish migrants and at least one enslaved Angolan. There were convicts serving out their sentences, bound laborers, conscripted soldiers, volunteers, artisans, missionaries, officers, gentlefolk, and the occasional aristocrat. Language, religion, and political authority served to tie these disparate people into a semblance of a colony. Swedish became the dominant language, and Swedish clergymen promoted the Lutheran religion. The royally appointed military governors ruled without being hampered by constitutions, legislatures, newspapers, or a voting public. The court had powers of life and death. Yet the people were not passive. They petitioned the governors over various contentious issues. In 1653 one-quarter of the male population signed a document accusing Governor Johan Printz of failing to protect the colony, of restraint of trade, and of personally profiting from his position. Printz tried and executed one opponent, but instead of suppressing the discontent the execution caused the gover-

nor's own soldiers to threaten to kill him at the nearest opportunity. Printz soon fled the colony. Royal authority would be difficult to enforce in the New World.

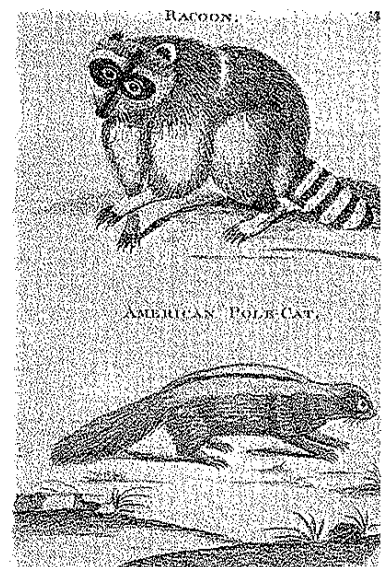
Despite the small number of adventurers, they did not congregate in villages. They established scattered farmsteads along the banks of the Delaware and its tributaries, with the most densely populated area at Upland (Chester, Delaware County). Swedish, Dutch, and German settlers generally preferred to acquire the already cleared fields of the Lenape and to build substantial houses and barns and carefully fence fields, orchards, and pastures. The Finns and some Swedes practiced a distinctly Northern European agricultural life developed in the deep forests of northern Scandinavia. They burned

away the underbrush and then girdled the trees so that they died. Wheat, rye, or other grains were planted between the dead trees and stumps. The settlers soon learned to grow maize, squash, and beans from the Indians. The trees provided logs that were notched by axes at the ends and turned into houses, stables, and granaries. Horses, cattle, sheep, and pigs were allowed to forage in the woods. The most meticulous farmers built flimsy shelters to protect livestock from winter storms, but most provided no shelter at all. Fields were fenced, but to keep the animals out of the grains and gardens, not to tend and control the livestock.

The interiors of the log houses were as crude as the exteriors, with little more than an open fireplace, a table, a bench or two, and some bedsteads in the corners. They were not necessarily permanent structures. Farmers moved when the soil became less fertile, or when the game and fish that supplemented the harvest gave out. Settlers from more temperate, pastoral areas in Sweden, England, and Germany were appalled at the untidiness of the landscape, the foraging livestock, the crudeness of the houses, the lack of substantial outbuildings, and the absence of roads. They accused the woodland farmers of laziness or of having degenerated into "savages." But in fact these methods were ideally suited for the topography of the eastern half of North America. Subsequent immigrants, particularly the Scots-Irish, adopted them. The accusations of frontier laziness persisted, however, even after log cabins entered into the mythology of America when Abraham Lincoln and others in the mid-nineteenth century made these cabins a proud symbol of their humble origins and democratic intentions.

SOME CONSEQUENCES OF EUROPEAN COLONIZATION

Even the small number of Europeans in the Delaware Valley caused environmental change in an area that had been isolated for thousands of years. Animals intentionally brought and shipped by settlers from Europe—such as horses, cattle, pigs, and sheep—were accompanied by rats and mice, houseflies, horseflies, lice, and other pests. Intermixed with imported wheat, rye, and barley seeds were the seeds of dandelion, plantain, daisy, and other weeds. Outside their usual ecological niches European weeds and pests spread rapidly. Some plants that were brought to Pennsylvania were beneficial. The Native people prized the peaches grown by the Swedes and planted peach trees throughout the region, so that by the 1680s newly arriving Europeans assumed that peaches were native to America because the fruit trees were found well past the bounds of colonial settlement. Not all transplantations were so benign, however. One Swede noted that when the colonists first arrived American grasses were abundant, but that "as soon as the country has been settled, the grass has died out from the roots, so that scarcely anything but black earth is left in the forests." Whether it was close cropping by farm animals, or new species of rodents, worms, parasites, or microbes that killed the grasses, the environment had been altered.



American species of animals were of interest to the European newcomers both out of scientific curiosity and for potential profit. When the newcomers asked the Lenape for the names of plants, animals, and places, the Europeans often misunderstood. In this case, the Algonquian word *arakun* was turned into "a raccoon." Europeans also named new species by looking for parallels with familiar Old World creatures. The small, short-legged, white-striped mammal reminded colonists of ferrets back home, so it was originally called the American polecat. Only later was the Algonquian word adopted: skunk.

Some species disappeared early in the settlement process. The European demand for beaver hats led to the unintentional depletion of the beaver during the seventeenth century. The extermination of the local wolf population, accomplished by about 1700, was the deliberate result of bounties paid for wolf scalps by colonial governments. Europeans firmly believed in the wolves' fabled reputation as predators of human flesh, although the Native peoples might have disabused them of this folklore had they been willing to listen. The environment was being enriched by new varieties of plants and animals, threatened by parasitic species, and degraded as some native species died out.

It was the importation of microbial agents, however, that was most devastating in the seventeenth century. Smallpox, measles, influenza, amoebic dysentery, whooping cough, malaria, and more arrived from Europe. Africa supplied yellow fever, dengue fever,* yaws,** and a few other diseases by way of the Caribbean trade. The first recorded epidemic in the Delaware Valley occurred in 1642 when a "great sickness" spread among the colonists. The next year, 15 of the 135 male inhabitants died in July and August alone, perhaps of amoebic dysentery or yellow fever. The survivors, Printz noted, "have no longer any desire to remain here." These epidemics probably spread among the Lenape as well. In 1654 a "plague" broke out on board a ship sailing to New Sweden, killing more than 100 of the 350 passengers. Typhus spread by body lice was the probable culprit. As soon as the ship landed, the disease spread to local residents. The Lenape wanted to send two medicine men to the ship to take the spirit away, but the Swedes refused, saying that if the Lenape would trust in the Christian God they would not get sick. However, because Christians were the first victims of the disease the Lenape were skeptical, and did not convert. In 1658 an "ardent prevailing fever" and scurvy afflicted residents, and in 1659 and 1661 there were outbreaks of smallpox. While the records highlight the sufferings of the colonists, the Native peoples of the Delaware River valley, of the Susquehanna region, and of the Ohio River systems suffered the most. Sheltered from the disease cycles of the Old World, they lacked immunity to these imported germs. Disease, more than weaponry, weakened the hold of the Native peoples on their homelands.

But the Swedes had even more difficulty holding on to their colony. Its weakness encouraged the Dutch to encroach from the north, and the English from the south. During the 1650s the Dutch again laid claim to the region, and encouraged settlement with a small military presence. In 1654 the new Swedish governor captured a small Dutch fort just south of Fort Christina. The Dutch responded in 1655 with a force of several hundred soldiers and sailors against a few score Swedes. The Swedes capitulated without a fight, humiliated by being paraded out of their fort "with musketballs in their mouths," presumably to indicate their symbolic deaths. New Sweden vanished forever, but it had bequeathed a legacy of uneasy peace in the Delaware Valley that allowed Quaker pacifism to flourish into the next century.

Despite some initial plundering of Swedish farms, Dutch rule was not harsh. Recognizing Swedish customs, the Dutch divided their territory at the Delaware River

*An infectious, viral, mosquito-borne eruptive fever, also known as breakbone fever, causing severe illness but rarely fatal.

**A contagious disease of the tropics caused by a spirochetal bacterium related to the syphilis *Trepanoma*, but not spread venereally, whose most obvious sign is skin lesions of the extremities; also known as frambesia.

and allowed the Swedes on the west bank to maintain their own officers and court system. The boundaries of the future state were being created based on administrative convenience, not on the economic and ecological functions of the river system. The period of Dutch control had little lasting impact on the area, and when the English conquered New Netherlands in 1664 there was little change until William Penn arrived in 1682. The Swedish community outlasted the Swedish colony, and in fact grew because of continued immigration and high birth rates. The settlers began to thrive economically, shifting from tobacco production to wheat and rye. In 1697 the king of Sweden sent a Lutheran minister and 400 religious and children's books to a Swedish community that numbered nearly 1,000 individuals. The Swedish government supported a mission in Pennsylvania until 1831, considering it for more than a century as a primitive place where inhabitants and immigrants alike needed the assistance of a civilized nation.

As European territories along the Delaware River changed hands, equally important changes were occurring among the Lenape, the Iroquois, and the Susquehannocks. The wars, economic changes, and migrations of peoples, described in the previous chapter, weakened and distracted these nations as European immigration surged. The hostilities particularly devastated western groups in the Ohio River valley. The Eries, the Monongahelas, and others disappeared; located too far west to have acquired the metallurgy and firearms that had strengthened the Susquehannocks and the Iroquois, they may also have suffered their first devastating epidemics. The Eries provide one example. In 1634 "Queen" Gegosasa permitted the Eries to join the Massassaugues in attacking some Senecas in revenge and in mourning for a murder. A mourning war channeled the grief of the survivors and was intended to be brief. In this case, however, the Erie warriors suffered heavy casualties. New economic rivalries turned a single incident designed to maintain honor and assuage grief into a twenty-year struggle. By 1654 Gegosasa sued for peace, but negotiations collapsed and war broke out with renewed violence. According to tradition, Gegosasa died in battle with many of her people, an epidemic swept through their villages, and any remaining Eries were absorbed by other groups, leaving only their name on the landscape. Now the Iroquois nominally controlled the Erie territory. In the absence of any significant population in the area, however, Shawnee people began moving into the newly depopulated lands, and French explorers mapping the Great Lakes began to look with interest on the western territory.

Meanwhile, the English initiated a new kind of colonial venture. Based on the massive



This late nineteenth-century re-creation of Penn's landing shows the dense woods of the Delaware River valley in 1682, the joy and the weakness of the passengers after two months at sea, the signs of existing European settlement in the presence of Swedish residents, and a log cabin.